Reviewer's report

**Title:** How collaborative are quality improvement collaboratives? A qualitative study in stroke care

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 12 October 2013

**Reviewer:** Julius Sim

**Reviewer's report:**

**Major compulsory revisions:**

I think it would help those readers who might be unfamiliar with framework analysis if the central tenets of this approach to analysis were briefly described. There is also no real detail on the nature of the interview guide and, more generally, the methodological approach to interviewing that was employed. Can you also be a bit more specific as to the form of content analysis? Presumably this was a form of thematic content analysis, rather than the more enumerative form of quantitative content analysis.

The section on study limitations is a little perfunctory - it would be helpful to expand the discussion a little here.

**Minor essential revisions**

Page 6: In Table 1, in what sense would aspirin 'modulate' stroke complications? Do you mean something like 'moderate', or 'mitigate', or 'miltate against'? I cannot work out what is meant by 'Weight assessment on admission, as a marker of the likelihood of repeated weighing.'

On page 9, in the sentence 'When this worked well...' (and perhaps also in relation to the paragraph as a whole), it is unclear if this observation is an inference from the informants' accounts, or whether it represents the authors' own perspective on the QIC.

**Discretionary revisions**

The reference relating to content analysis (45) is rather general - can a source more specific to this be used?

In the quotations on page 8 (twice), 'cos may be a difficult contraction for some readers whose first language is not English - suggest 'cause.

It's not clear why there is a question mark at the end of the quotation beginning 'Actually...'. Is it meant to be there?

On page 9, in formal writing use 'quotations' rather than 'quotes'.

On page 10, top line, the bracketing seems odd. Should this read 'OT
On page 11, change 'variability on' to 'variability in'. The word 'headroom for improvement' has a rather jargony ring to it - can this be rephrased? Superfluous quotation mark at beginning of last quotation on this page.

On page 12, I think a full stop, not a comma, should follow 'comfortable with'.

In the quotations generally, the meaning of the ellipses is not clear. Do they represent unfinished sentences uttered by the informants or pauses, or words that have been edited out? It might be clearer if ... were used for the first two and [...] for the last, or some other similar distinction.

The references are inconsistent (both abbreviated and full journal titles, variable capitalization in journal titles) and some references appear to be incomplete (e.g. 37, 38, 46, 53). No editors are given for reference 44.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests